

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESB 5620

As Reported by House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to school safety.

Brief Description: Changing school safety-related drills.

Sponsors: Senators King and McAuliffe.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 3/14/13, 3/26/13 [DP].

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Increases the number of school lockdown drills from one to three, and requires one other safety-related drill determined by the school.
- Decreases the number of fire evacuation drills from six to three.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 20 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Stonier, Vice Chair; Dahlquist, Ranking Minority Member; Magendanz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Fagan, Haigh, Hargrove, Hawkins, Hayes, Hunt, Klippert, Lytton, Maxwell, McCoy, Orwall, Pike, Pollet, Seaquist and Warnick.

Staff: Luke Wickham (786-7146).

Background:

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction published a School Safety Planning Manual (Manual) in June 2008. The Manual is a guide for K-12 schools to create and implement safety plans in compliance with both state and federal laws, and includes the Comprehensive Safe School Plan Checklists. Legislation that passed in 2003 requires the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) to create and operate a

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statewide first responder building mapping information system, which maps all state and local government buildings.

School districts are required to adopt and implement safe school plans consistent with the School Mapping Information System. School districts are further required, to the extent funds are available, to review and update the safe school plans. Schools must conduct at least one safety-related drill each month that school is in session. The types of drills are specified to include one drill for lockdowns, one drill for shelter-in-place, and six drills for fire evacuation. Schools should consider drills for earthquakes, tsunamis, or high-risk events. Schools must document the time and date of drills.

Summary of Bill:

The number of school lockdown drills required by statute is increased from one to three, and the number of fire evacuation drills is decreased from six to three. Schools are also required to conduct one other safety-related drill determined by the school.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) It is reasonable to reduce the number of fire drills from six to three. There has not been a related loss of a life in a school since the 1950s. The number of drills required in schools stays the same under this bill. There have been recent school fires but all of these fires occurred during the evening. Reducing the number of fire drills makes sense because there is a greater need for lockdown drills than for fire drills.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator King, prime sponsor; and Jerry Bender, Association of Washington School Principals.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.